

THE “GRAMMAR” OF SACRIFICE

A Generativist Study of the Israelite
Sacrificial System in the Priestly Writings

with

A “GRAMMAR” OF Σ



NAPHTALI S. MESHEL

OXFORD

THE “GRAMMAR” OF SACRIFICE
WITH
A “GRAMMAR” OF Σ

This page intentionally left blank

The “Grammar” of Sacrifice

*A Generativist Study of the Israelite Sacrificial
System in the Priestly Writings*

with

A “Grammar” of Σ

NAPHTALI S. MESHEL

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD

UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP,
United Kingdom

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered trade mark of
Oxford University Press in the UK and in certain other countries.

© Naphtali S. Meshel 2014

The moral rights of the author have been asserted

First Edition published in 2014

Impression: 1

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in
a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the
prior permission in writing of Oxford University Press, or as expressly permitted
by law, by licence or under terms agreed with the appropriate reprographics
rights organization. Enquiries concerning reproduction outside the scope of the
above should be sent to the Rights Department, Oxford University Press, at the
address above

You must not circulate this work in any other form
and you must impose this same condition on any acquirer

Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
Data available

Library of Congress Control Number: 2013950786
Data available

ISBN 978-0-19-870556-7

Printed and bound by
CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY

for Maya, Eyal, Ellah, Hadas, and Itai

This page intentionally left blank

Preface

There are two aspects to this study. On the one hand, it is a work in biblical studies, the main objective of which is to contribute to the interpretation of texts in the Hebrew Bible pertaining to sacrificial rituals. Although the sacrificial laws constitute a significant part of the Pentateuch, and although sacrifice was clearly a cardinal institution in ancient Israelite culture, many aspects of the highly technical biblical texts that pertain to sacrifice remain obscure. This study is thus part of an ongoing scholarly effort to understand more fully the Israelite sacrificial system within its ancient Near Eastern setting—in all of its particulars as well as in its broader contours.

On the other hand, it is a theoretical study in religion, more specifically in the study of ritual, ritology. Its main objective is to demonstrate that it is possible to formulate a “grammar” of a ritual system. In this sense, it is an attempt to pursue the idea—first suggested in ancient times and reiterated in modern anthropology—that ritual systems possess grammars analogous to those of natural languages, by proceeding to compose one such grammar.

As a work in the field of biblical studies, this study is based on an analysis of biblical sacrificial texts within their ancient Near Eastern context, using the philological, text-historical, and literary tools of biblical criticism. Since such philological work has been carried out in a very comprehensive manner, particularly in late twentieth-century biblical scholarship, the present study can rely heavily on existing scholarship in this regard. However, since a certain number of widely accepted interpretations of biblical texts that pertain to the Israelite sacrificial system are called into question upon reexamination, these are subjected to new analysis and the results are presented.

Following this preliminary groundwork, I shall attempt to identify more precisely some of the basic elements employed in the Israelite sacrificial system—for example, to arrive at the precise denotation of a number of technical terms for the categories of sacrificial animals.

The next task is to identify the *operative categories* underlying the Israelite sacrificial system represented in the texts under examination (henceforth referred to as Σ). The rationale underlying this venture is that if grammars of natural languages consist of operative categories such as phonology and syntax, and if Σ , too, has a grammar, then one should expect to find in it a number of operative categories that are either identical to or different from those found in the grammars of natural languages. If the operative categories of Σ are found to be different from those of natural languages, then they must be defined clearly and given appropriate names.

The present volume comprises two separate works—the bulk of the present volume, *The “Grammar” of Sacrifice*, is dedicated to the identification and definition of the operative categories of Σ . It should be perceived as an introduction to the “Grammar” itself, A “Grammar” of Σ , which is located at the end of the present volume.

A word is in order regarding the use of the term “Generativist” in the subtitle. A brief glance at the present volume might suggest that it is essentially a structuralist study of a ritual system. However, while I gratefully acknowledge this study’s debt to Structuralism, there are various reasons—discussed in sections 1.3.2, 1.3.3, 1.4 and 5.7—for preferring a generativist model.

The present book is the result of research begun during 2005–2009 at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. It was conceived as a doctoral dissertation under the supervision of my teacher and mentor, Professor Baruch J. Schwartz. I thank him from the depths of my heart. I wish to thank the members of the Ph.D. committee, Professor Israel Knohl and Professor David Shulman for the inspiration through continued interchange. No words are sufficient to express my gratitude to the late Professor Milgrom and to Dr. Jo Milgrom. I am particularly grateful to Professor Roy E. Gane. Shortly after I was introduced to his work on “ritual syntax,” I learned that he was in Jordan. By the end of that week I was in Amman with him, for what would evolve into a lasting mentorship and friendship. The specific comments that I received from Professor Gane on many occasions have been invaluable for the evolution of this project.

Professor Yochanan Grinshpon lit up the occasional dark hours of intellectual despair that I experienced while working on this book.

Thanks to David and Shari Satran for their enduring friendship and support; and to my friends and colleagues at the Hebrew University—in particular Yakir Paz and Tzakhi Freedman—for their helpful comments.

I thank Yad Hanadiv for an ideal postdoctoral fellowship: first in Mysore with Professors H. V. Nagaraja Rao and Gangadhara Bhatt; and later at the University of Pennsylvania with Professor Jeffrey Tigay.

Princeton University has been an ideal setting for completion of this project. Comments from my colleagues, particularly those in the Department of Religion and in the Program for Judaic Studies, have improved the final product in many ways. In particular, I am grateful to Professor John Gager and Professor Martha Himmelfarb for the conversations we have had on many aspects of this work. Professor Jonathan Gold read sections of the book and offered many insightful comments. I am thankful to Professor Gary Rendsburg and to Professor Axel Michaels for their support and advice.

The Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton was a most gracious host during 2013–14, enabling me to explore the ways in which the “grammar” of Σ is applicable more broadly to Sanskrit and Semitic sacrificial ritual texts, and to identify the limits of this applicability.

It appears that some of the operative categories identified in Σ are applicable in a nontrivial way to other Northwest Semitic systems (in particular, systems represented in texts from Ugarit and from Emar), while others are hardly relevant for those systems; and that the explanatory power of some of the operative categories may extend to Vedic ritual systems, while other categories are entirely inapplicable to Sanskrit ritual texts such as the *Āpastamba Śrautasūtra*. Moreover, it appears that new and different operative categories are found in these other systems, which are not found in Σ .

Above all, I wish to thank my students for the intellectual exchange I have had with them over the course of the years. Anton Fleissner's fingerprints are discernible on every page of this book: he commented on everything from the grand contours of the "grammar" of sacrifice to the minutiae of the grammar of each English sentence. I thank my colleague Judah Kraut, who, with the acumen of an expert Bible scholar and a discerning critical eye, led me to rethink several specific details, as well as general theoretical claims. Rebecca Khalandovsky contributed significantly to the chapter on Jugation. Liane Marquis assisted with the proofs, and offered several insightful comments. Special thanks are due to Jessica O'Rourke Suchoff for her continuous engagement in this project and in particular for her invaluable contribution to the final stages of the book's production.

I wish to thank the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture for supporting this project financially. I wish to express my gratitude to the Office of the Dean of the Faculty at Princeton University, to the Anonymous Fund, and particularly to the Program in Judaic Studies at Princeton University and to Professor Peter Schäfer for the generous support I have received, especially during 2013–14. Thanks are due to the Firestone Library staff and to the Princeton Theological Seminary Library—in particular to Kate Skrebutenas. The library staff at the Institute for Advanced Study have been extraordinarily helpful.

I would like to thank Tom Perridge, the editorial board, and the staff at Oxford University Press for the publication of this book; and Kurt Ballstadt and Dr. Eve Levavi Feinstein for the preparation of the indices.

I wish to thank my parents, Yonit and Yitzchak, and my sister, Yael. Above all, thanks go to my wife, Maya, my better half, my friend and companion for life, and to our children, Eyal, Ellah, Hadas and Itai.

As a final remark, I would like to note that it is easy to forget, amidst the academic parlance, the graphic illustrations, and abstract formulae, that somewhere at the end-nodes of this "grammar" there stood priests and laypeople, sharp knives, a consuming fire, and animals of flesh and blood, subject to the violence of the cruelest and most systematic killer of them all.

This page intentionally left blank

Contents

THE “GRAMMAR” OF SACRIFICE

<i>List of Figures and Tables</i>	xiii
<i>Figures</i>	xiii
<i>Tables</i>	xiv
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xv
<i>Abbreviations Used in Bibliography and References</i>	xv
<i>General Sigla and Abbreviations</i>	xvii
<i>List of Definitions</i>	xix
General	xix
Technical Sacrificial Terms	xix
Sets Used in the Grammar	xxi
Sigla Used for Formal Analysis	xxi
 1. Introduction	 1
1.1 Patañjali	1
1.2 Maimonides' Generalizations	5
1.3 Modern Anthropology	6
1.4 Methodological Considerations	18
1.5 Categories of the Grammar of Σ	27
 2. Zoemics	 29
2.1 Introduction	29
2.2 The Zoemic Classification System	33
2.3 Diachronic Zoemics	43
2.4 Some Uncertainties and Widespread Mistranslations	50
2.5 Zoemics and Meaning	61
 3. Jugation	 63
3.1 Introduction	63
3.2 Standard Examples	65
3.3 Identifying Subordination in General: Some Linguistic Considerations	68
3.4 More Complex Examples	73
3.5 Diachronic Jugation	79
3.6 The Strength of Links among Jugates	80
3.7 The Scope of Subordinate Jugation	84
3.8 Jugation Induced by Jugation	93
3.9 Generative Jugation	96

4. Hierarchics	104
4.1 Introduction	104
4.2 Dual Usage in the Hierarchic System	106
4.3 Some Generalizations	127
5. Praxemics	130
5.1 Introduction	130
5.2 Praxemics as One Operative Category in the Grammar of Ritual	131
5.3 Some Methodological Limitations	133
5.4 The Praxemic Description	138
5.5 Praxemic Components in Detail	141
5.6 Generativity in the Grammar of Sacrifice	163
5.7 The Method of Composing Grammatical Rules	170
6. Meaning	174
6.1 Grammars Without Meanings	174
6.2 The Meanings of "Meaning"	177
6.3 The Interface Between Jugation, Hierarchics, and Meaning	191
6.4 Conclusion	195
7. The Grammar of Sacrifice and the Sacrifice of Grammar	198
7.1 Unconscious Internalization	198
7.2 Applications of the Present Grammar	201
7.3 Beyond Σ	203
7.4 The Use of the Term "Grammar"	206
Bibliography	210

A "GRAMMAR" OF Σ

Zoemics	1
Jugation	4
Hierarchics	9
Praxemics	9
<i>General Index</i>	27
<i>Index of Hebrew Terms</i>	32
<i>Index Locorum</i>	35
<i>Index of Authors</i>	43

List of Figures and Tables

FIGURES

Figure 1. Structure of an <i>agnicayana</i>	15
Figure 2. Classification according to zoological class	34
Figure 3. Two-dimensional zoemic map	36
Figure 4. Three-dimensional zoemic map	36
Figure 5. Basic jugational pattern according to Numbers 15	65
Figure 6. Jugational pattern of semolina offering in Leviticus 2:1–3	66
Figure 7. Relation of jugates in Numbers 6	71
Figure 8. Relation of jugates in Exodus 29 and Leviticus 8	74
Figure 9. Relation of jugates in Leviticus 7	76
Figure 10. Jugational pattern in Leviticus 23:18–20	79
Figure 11. Ezekiel's linear jugational model	81
Figure 12. Model A: male goat with subordinate jugation of wine	90
Figure 13. Model B: male goat without subordinate jugates	90
Figure 14. Basic jugational pattern including salt	98
Figure 15. Jugation of salt _B to salt _A	102
Figure 16. Never-ending jugation of salt	102
Figure 17. Hierarchic structure of wholeburnt offerings in Numbers 28:11–15	105
Figure 18. Hierarchic structure for the New Moon ceremony	105
Figure 19. Hierarchic structure in Leviticus 9:18	107
Figure 20. "Purification offering of purgation": minimal hierarchical structure	108
Figure 21. Rule H1	109
Figure 22. The "purification offering of purgation" in the <i>Temple Scroll</i> : hierarchic structure	110
Figure 23. Rule H2	111
Figure 24. Hierarchic structure in Ezra 8:35	113
Figure 25. Hierarchic structure of an ordination offering according to the <i>Temple Scroll</i>	114
Figure 26. Hierarchic structure of a purification offering according to the <i>Temple Scroll</i>	116
Figure 27. Ibn Ezra's interpretation of the offerings of the wealthy and the indigent offerers	117

Figure 28. Hierarchies above and beneath the zoemic level	118
Figure 29. Rule H3	118
Figure 30. Rule H4	119
Figure 31. Hierarchics within a single zoeme according to <i>b Zebah</i> 9b	120
Figure 32. Purification zoemes in P	120
Figure 33. Hierarchic structure in Leviticus 5:6	123
Figure 34. Hierarchic structure in Leviticus 5:7	124
Figure 35. Rule H5	127
Figure 36. Rule H6	128
Figure 37. Two representations of Patañjali’s allegory	208

TABLES

Table 1. Zoemes attested in P	37
Table 2. Table of jugation according to Numbers 15	65

List of Abbreviations

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

For standard abbreviations used in biblical studies, see *JBL* 117 (1998), 555–79.

- ADL Jonas C. Greenfield, Michael E. Stone, and Ester Eshel (eds), *The Aramaic Levi Document: Edition, Translation, Commentary*. Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha 19. Leiden: Brill, 2004.
- ANET J.B. Pritchard (ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969.
- Ant. Jud. Flavius Josephus, *Judean Antiquities 1–4*, Translation and Commentary by Louis Feldman. Flavius Josephus: translation and commentary 3. Leiden: Brill, 2000.
- BETL Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
- BWDW Gerhard Wahrig, Hildegard Krämer, and Harald Zimmermann (eds), *Brockhaus Wahrig Deutsches Wörterbuch*. Wiesbaden: Brockhaus, 1980–1984.
- BHS *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*
- BKAT Biblischer Kommentar Altes Testament
- BN *Biblische Notizen*
- CAD *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*. Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 1956–2010.
- CGED *Cassell's German–English English–German Dictionary*. New York: Macmillan, 1978.
- CTH Catalogue des Textes Hittites
- DLF Emile Littré, *Dictionnaire de la langue française*. Paris: Gallimard, 1958.
- DSL Philo, *On the Special Laws (De Specialibus Legibus)*. Translated by F. H. Colson. Loeb Classical Library, Philo 7. London: W. Heinemann, 1937.
- DUL Gregorio del Olmo Lete and Joaquín Sanmartín (eds), *A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition*. Translated by Wilfred G.E. Watson. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
- FAT Forschungen zum Alten Testament
- Gen. Apoc. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave I: A Commentary*. 2nd rev. edn. Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1971.
- GKC E. Kautzsch (ed), *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 2nd English edn; rev. in accordance with the 28th German edition by A.E. Cowley; Oxford: Clarendon, 1910).

- GNT Kurt Aland, et al. (eds), *The Greek New Testament*. 4th edn. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994.
- HIM Maimonides, Laws of Prohibitions Pertaining to the Altar (הל' איסורי מזבח).
- HKM Maimonides, Laws of Temple Vessels (הל' כלי המקדש).
- HMQ Maimonides, Laws of Sacrificial Procedures (הל' מעשה הקרבנות).
- HPM Maimonides, Laws of Disqualified Sancta (הל' פסולי המוקדשים).
- HQP Maimonides, Laws of the Paschal Offering (הל' קרבן פסח).
- HR *History of Religions*
- HTM Maimonides, Laws of Regular and Festival Offerings (הל' תמידין ומוספין).
- HTR *Harvard Theological Review*
- HUCA *Hebrew Union College Annual*
- HYH Maimonides, Laws of the Service of the Day of Atonement (הל' עבודת יום הכפורים).
- IHQ *Indian Historical Quarterly*
- JA *Journal Asiatique*
- JAOS *Journal of the American Oriental Society*
- JB Jerusalem Bible
- JBL *Journal of Biblical Literature*
- JIPh *Journal of Indian Philosophy*
- JM Paul Joüon *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*. Subsidia Biblica 14/i–4/ii; trans. and rev. T. Muraoka. 2 vols. Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1996.
- JTS *Journal of Theological Studies*
- KAI H. Donner and W. Röllig, *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften*. vols 1–2. 2nd edn. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1973.
- KBL L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner (eds), *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti libros* Leiden: Brill, 2nd edn. 1958.
- m. *Mishna*
- M.–W. Monier Monier-Williams, *An English–Sanskrit Dictionary* Ottawa: Laurier Books, 2001.
- WNCD *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*. Springfield, MA: G. & C. Merriam, 1980.
- Mah. S.D. Joshi and J.A.F. Roodbergen, *Patañjali's Vyākaraṇa-Mahābhāṣya* vol. 1: *Paspaśāhnika*. Publications of the Centre of Advanced Study in Sanskrit 15. Pune: University of Poona, 1986.
- Maim. Maimonides
- MMT Elisha Qimron and John Strugnell, *Miqṣat Ma'ase ha-Torah*. Discoveries in the Judean Desert 10. Oxford: Clarendon, 1994.
- NCFD *The New Cassell's French Dictionary*. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1962.

<i>Neof.</i>	Alejandro Díez Macho <i>Neophiti 1: Targum palestinense ms de la biblioteca vaticana</i> , Tomo III: Levítico. Textos y estudios 9. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1971.
NEB	New English Bible
NSK	Neuer Stuttgarter Kommentar
PEQ	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>
RSV	Revised Standard Version
<i>Sam</i>	Avraham ye-Ratson Tseḏaḳah (eds), <i>Ḥamishah ḥumshe Torah : nusah Shomroni 'im hadgashah meduyeket shel ha-shinuyim ben shte ha-nusha'ot</i> . Tel-Aviv, 1961–1965.
<i>SED</i>	Alexander Militarev and Leonid Kogan, <i>Semitic Etymological Dictionary</i> , AOAT 278/1–2. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2000–.
<i>t</i>	Mosheh Shemu'el Tsuḳermandel (ed.), <i>Tosefta: 'Al pi kitve yad Erfurṭ u-Ṷinah 'im mar'e meḳomot ye-ḥilufe girsa'ot u-maftehot</i> . Jerusalem: Bamberger et Ṷahrman, 1937.
<i>Tanh.</i>	<i>Midrash Tanḥuma 'al ḥamishah ḥumshe Torah</i> . 2 vols. Jerusalem: Eshkol, 1963.
<i>TDOT</i>	G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry (eds), <i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Translated by John T. Willis and David E. Green. 15 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977–2006.
<i>TS</i>	Elisha Qimron, <i>The Temple Scroll: A Critical Edition with Extensive Reconstructions</i> . Beer Sheva: Ben Gurion University of the Negev, 1996.
<i>TSKY</i>	The Taittiriya Saṃhitā of the Black Yajur-veda, with the commentary of Bhaṭṭabhaṣkaramiśra (ed). A. Mahādeva Śāstri and Panditaratnam K. Rangāchārya (vol. 9, Government Oriental Library Series, Bibliotheca Sanskrita 17; Mysore: Government branch press, 1898).
<i>UF</i>	<i>Ugaritische Forschungen</i>
<i>Vg</i>	Vulgata
<i>VP</i>	<i>Vākyapadiyam Part I: With the Commentaries Svopajñavṛtti by Harivṛṣabha and Ambākartrī by 'Padmaśrī' Pt. Raghunātha Śarma</i> . Varanasi, 1988.
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament

GENERAL SIGLA AND ABBREVIATIONS

Aram.	Aramaic
BH	Biblical Hebrew
D	the Deuteronomic document
Gk	Greek

H	the Holiness Legislation
inf. abs.	infinitive absolute
J	the Yahwistic document
MH	Mishnaic Hebrew
ms(s)	manuscript(s)
MT	Masoretic Text
P	the Priestly document in the Pentateuch, including P and H. Where P is used in distinction from H, this is clearly indicated in the text.
pron.suff.	pronominal suffix
pron.pos.suff.	pronominal possessive suffix
[text]	reconstructed text (in English translation or in original language)
𐤁𐤏𐤑𐤏	reconstructed Hebrew text in <i>TS</i>
𐤁𐤏𐤑𐤏	the reading is most probable (in <i>TS</i> , ed. Qimron).
𐤁𐤏𐤑𐤏	the reading is uncertain (in <i>TS</i> , ed. Qimron).
	parallelism
→	indicates a transformation performed in the process of the construction of a single grammatical sequence
➔	indicates a diachronic shift. The text to the left of the arrow applies to the more ancient system; the text to the right applies to the later system.
*	(before a linguistic form or a text) indicates an unattested form or a hypothetical text

List of Definitions

The pronunciation symbols follow the simplified system used by Merriam-Webster and other American dictionaries.

GENERAL

GRAMMAR: (small caps) is used in contradistinction from “grammar” (lower-case) to designate the particular grammar of Σ offered in this study. Note that other grammars of this system can be composed, and other sacrificial systems may have their own “grammars.”

Σ : the ancient Israelite Priestly sacrificial system

TECHNICAL SACRIFICIAL TERMS

asham see **reparation offering**

atomact *n sgl*: an elementary unit of action (see §5.5.1)

bovine *adj, also nominalized adj*: (used narrowly to denote) a domestic “cow” (*Bos taurus*) of any age or sex

calendric offering: a sacrificial offering required at a designated time of the day, week, month, or year, as determined by the calendar

caprine *adj, also nominalized adj*: (used narrowly to denote) a domestic “goat” (*Capra aegagrus hircus*) of any age or sex

cereal offering (also: **grain offering**): an offering the main constituent of which is wheat or barley (note that only some of the cereal/grain offerings are considered מנחת) **מנחת**)

co-jugates *n pl*: two or more jugates at the same level that are not jugated to different elements (see p. 63)

coterminous offerings: calendric offerings occurring on the same day

grain offering see **cereal offering**

hatta't see **purification offering**

hierarchics *n pl but sgl or pl in constr*: the study of the composition of sacrificial **types** wherein one or more sacrificial types constitute another sacrificial type

jugate \jə-'gāt\ *vt*: to join (one sacrificial material to another)

jugate \'jü-gət, 'jü-.gāt\ *n*: any sacrificial material, either animal or non-animal, when joined with at least one other sacrificial element

jugation \ˈjə-gā-shən\ *n sgl*: the joining of two or more animal or non-animal sacrificial materials—**jugational** *adj*

materia sacra: animal and non-animal material placed on the altar or, in the case of blood, applied to the sancta; primarily: flesh, suet and blood

millu'im see **ordination offering**

offerer: a person on whose behalf a sacrificial ritual is performed

ordination offering (also מְלֵאִים, מְלֻאִים, *millu'im*, transliteration: *millû'im*): a rare sacrificial type, attested usually in the context of the ordination of priests. In P it entails the application of some of an animal's blood on the priests who are being ordained, tossing some of the blood on the altar, and burning the suet on the altar.

'olah see **wholeburnt offering**

ovine *adj*, also *nominalized adj*: (used narrowly to denote) a domestic "sheep" (*Ovis aries*) of any age or sex

praxeme \ˈprak-sēm\: a discrete segment of a ritual sequence (see §5.1)

praxemics \prak-'se-miks\ *n, pl but sgl or pl in constr*: the study of ritual from the point of view of the actions involved in its performance

purification offering (also חֲטָאֵת, *hatta't*, transliteration: *ḥaṭṭā't*): 1. a sacrificial type in which the blood of an animal is applied at least to the horns of the bronze altar (or to the wall and to the base of the altar, if the animal is a bird), its suet is incinerated on the upper surface of the bronze altar (if the animal is a quadruped), and its flesh is consumed by a priest or incinerated outside the camp 2. a grain offering offered in accordance with the law in Lev 5:11–13

reparation offering (also אֲשָׁם, *asham*, transliteration: *āšām*): a sacrificial type in which blood of a zoeme is tossed upon the altar, its suet is incinerated on the upper surface of the altar, and its flesh is consumed by a priest

sacrificial complex: a rite that entails the offering of two or more jugates

shelamim see **wellbeing offering**

subordinate jugate *n sgl*: a jugate offered together with another jugate as its adjunct or additive

type see **sacrificial type**

volitional offering: an offering brought on the offerer's spontaneous initiative

votive offering: an offering brought in fulfillment of a vow

wellbeing offering (also שְׁלָמִים, *shelamim*, transliteration: *šēlāmīm*): a sacrificial type in which the blood of an animal is tossed upon the bronze altar, its suet is incinerated on the upper surface of the altar, and most of its flesh is consumed by the offerer and his or her party

wholeburnt offering (also עֹלָה, עֹלָה, *'olah*, transliteration: *'ōlāh* or *'ōlā*): a sacrificial type in which the blood of an animal is tossed upon the altar (or squeezed against the wall of the altar, if the animal is a bird)

and its flesh and suet are incinerated on the upper surface of the altar

zoeme \zō-ēm\ *n*: 1. a class of animals to which a set of sacrificial rules applies 2. a member (specimen) of such a class—**zoemic** *adj*

zoemics \zō-'e-miks, zō-'ē-miks\ *n pl but sgl or pl in constr*: the study of the classes of animals used in ritual sacrifice

זָשָׁם see reparation offering

חֲטָאת see purification offering

מִלּוּאִים see ordination offering

עֹלָה see wholeburnt offering

שְׁלָמִים see wellbeing offering

SETS USED IN THE GRAMMAR

sacrificial class = {calendric, non-calendric}

sacrificial genus = {votive, volitional}

sacrificial kind = {private, public}

sacrificial type = {wholeburnt, wellbeing, purification, reparation, ordination}

SIGLA USED FOR FORMAL ANALYSIS

Sigla for Zoemics (see pp. 37–9 Table 1)

- ♂ bovine (“cow” in colloquial English, e.g., שׁוֹר)
- ♀ female bovine (“female cow” of any age; עֵגְלָה in BH)
- ♂ male bovine (“male cow” of any age, e.g., מִן הַבָּקָר — זָכָר, perhaps יֶעֱגֵל)
- B mature bovine (either sex; no common English term)
- ♀ mature female bovine (“cow,” possibly פָּרָה)
- ♂ mature male bovine (“bull,” פֶּר)
- b immature bovine (“calf” of either sex)
- ♀ immature female bovine (“female calf”)
- ♂ immature male bovine (e.g., “male calf,” עֵגֶל . . . בֶּן שָׁנָתוֹ)
- ⌘ ovine or caprine (“sheep or goat, member of the flock,” “small cattle,” שָׂה)
- ♂ (comprising s♂ + g♂; immature male sheep or goat, שָׂה . . . זָכָר בֶּן שָׁנָה)
- ⌘ caprine (“member of the goat family,” עִז)
- ♀ female caprine (“she-goat” of any age; שְׁעִירַת עִזִּים)
- ♂ male caprine (“he-goat” of any age, e.g., מִן הָעִזִּים . . . זָכָר)
- G mature caprine (either sex, no common English term)

G♀	mature female caprine (“nanny-goat”)
G♂	mature male caprine (עֲתוּד)
g	immature caprine (“kid,” either sex; עֶז בַּת־שְׁנָתָה)
g♀	immature female caprine (“female kid”)
g♂	immature male caprine (“male kid”)
⓪	bird (turtledove or pigeon), equivalent to T/Y
ⓠ	quadruped (bovine, ovine, or caprine)
S	ovine (“member of the sheep family,” e.g., כֶּשֶׁב, rarely כֶּבֶשׂ)
S♀	female ovine (“female sheep” of any age; כֶּשֶׁבָּה)
S♂	male ovine (“male sheep” of any age, e.g., מִן הַכְּשָׁבִים . . . זָכָר)
S	mature ovine (no common English term; either sex)
S♀	mature female ovine (“mature ewe,” i.e., mature female sheep, רֹחֵל in BH)
S♂	mature male ovine (“ram,” אֵיל)
s	immature ovine (“lamb,” either sex)
s♀	immature female ovine (“female lamb,” כֶּבֶשֶׁה בַּת־שְׁנָתָה)
s♂	immature male ovine (“male lamb,” כֶּבֶשׂ בֶּן־שְׁנָתוֹ)
T	mature turtledove
T	turtledove (any age or sex; תֹּר)
T/Y	turtledove of any age or pigeon of any age, equivalent to ⓪
T/y	mature turtledove or young pigeon
Y	pigeon (any age or sex; בֶּן יוֹנָה)
y	fledgling pigeon
Z	sacrificial animal (quadrupeds and birds)

! (exclamation mark, before zoeme) indicates the zoeme and all of the grammatical combinations of narrower zoemes within it. For example, if a zoeme *x* comprises four blocks in the “zoemic map,” (p. 36) the set !*x* would consist of the zoeme *x* itself, and all other zoemes comprising one or more of those same four blocks.

E.g., !S = {S, S♂, S♀}

In words: The symbol !S designates a set of zoemes that includes the zoeme “mature ovine” (S) itself, and two narrower zoemes, “mature male ovine” (S♂) and “mature female ovine” (S♀).

Sacrificial type in superscript following a zoeme designates its sacrificial type: S♂^{wholeburnt} designates a mature male ovine (“ram”) offered as a wholeburnt offering.

Sigla for Jugation

j_x *In words:* a sacrificial material by the name of *j* on Level *x*
j designates the sacrificial material (a zoeme or non-animal sacrificial material), whereas *x* indicates its jugational level—Level A, Level B,

Level C, etc.

Examples:

wine_B indicates the jugate *wine* offered on hierarchic *Level B*, i.e., a B-level jugate of wine directly subordinate to another jugate on *Level A*

$S\hat{\sigma}_A$ indicates the zoeme $S\hat{\sigma}$ (“ram”) offered on jugational *Level A*

$S\hat{\sigma}_A^{\text{wholeburnt}}$ indicates an A-level ram offered as a wholeburnt offering.

Sigla for Hierarchics

h_x In words: a sacrificial material by the name of h on hierarchic *Level x* h designates the sacrificial material, x indicates its hierarchic level, e.g., Level -1, Level 0, Level +1.

Note: The plus sign (+) is always used where x is a positive integer (e.g., h_{+1}), in order to avoid confusion with simple ordinal indexation, which is never indicated with a plus sign.

In hierarchics, sacrificial types can be located on hierarchic levels, e.g.:

$\text{wholeburnt}_{+1} = \{S\hat{\sigma}_0^{\text{wholeburnt}}, S\hat{\sigma}_0^{\text{purification}}\}$

In words: wholeburnt complex on hierarchic Level +1 comprises a male lamb offered as a wholeburnt offering on Level 0 and a female lamb offered as a purification offering on Level 0.

Sigla for Praxemics

$a(g,o,t,l)$ a praxeme consisting of atomact a , agent g , object o , target t and location l

+

 indicates the combination of components in a single praxeme (e.g., *daub+blood+horns*)

#

 indicates the combination of consecutive praxemes (e.g., *daub+blood+horns # pour+blood+base*).

This page intentionally left blank

Introduction

*catvāri śṛṅgā trāyo asya pādā / dvé śīrṣe saptā hāstāso asya // tridhā
baddhó vṛṣabhó roravīti / mahó devó mārtyāṁ ā viveśa*

Four horns, three feet he has, two heads, seven hands he has. Bound in
three ways the bull bellows loudly. A mighty god has entered mortals.

Ṛgveda 4.58.3

1.1 PATAÑJALI

Masked in the form of a many-headed snake, according to an Indian tradition, a master reveals a grammatical text to his students. The eager grammarians cannot see their teacher—though perhaps they are able to discern the sleek snake’s silhouette slithering behind the screen he has set up.¹ Before turning to the minutiae of the grammar of the Sanskrit language, the master offers a general introduction, extolling the virtues and joys of those who study grammar: just as a wife filled with desire, beautifully dressed, discloses herself to her husband, even so language discloses her body to the man who is learned in speech.² On the other hand, he reminds his audience of the dangers that inhere in a failure to master correct speech: the demise of the demons, the *asuras*, is associated with their substandard grammar; and the destruction of Vṛtra resulted from the mere misplacement of an accent in a compound. An unintentional but powerful speech-act, intended to render this demon the vanquisher of the god Indra, instead made Indra his vanquisher. Seemingly minute grammatical errors, one concludes, may have cosmic ramifications.³

The sage is Patañjali, the text his *Mahābhāṣya*. Apparently composed in

¹ See Śivadatta et al. 1934:27 and Chakravarti 1926:262–4.

² *Mah.* 1.38; Joshi and Roodbergen 1986:57–8; Chatterji 1964:24.

³ *Mah.* 1.22–24; Joshi and Roodbergen 1986:37–42.

the second century BCE,⁴ the text is essentially a commentary on the classical Sanskrit grammar of *Pāṇini*. It is the first recorded text to suggest that there is a formal homology between language and ritual, an idea that serves as an organizing principle for this book. The rituals that we will examine, however, belong to a culture that is geographically removed from Patañjali’s own: the ancient Israelite culture, as reflected in the literature of the Hebrew Bible.

In Patañjali, the formal homology between ritual and language pertains to a specific tension inherent in both systems, a tension between the ephemeral and the eternal, the limited and the infinite. Patañjali relates a story that demonstrates this duality: for thousands of years, the god Bṛhaspati tried to relate to Indra the complete collection of individual words but could not come to the end;⁵ since human lives are much shorter than that, claims Patañjali, some general rules and exceptions must be composed if language is to be taught. This conception of the relationship between the finite number of utterances actually expressed and the potentially infinite number of utterances that can be expressed closely resembles the distinction between what Noam Chomsky calls performance and competence.⁶ But for Patañjali, this is only half of the story: he reminds his readers of *mahāsatras*, imaginary sacrificial rituals that can last up to a thousand years.⁷ Patañjali draws an analogy between these lengthy sacrifices and the infinite number of utterances, which, though grammatical, remain as-yet-unuttered: competence in either cannot be acquired by direct exposure.⁸ Thus we find that rituals must have “grammars,” in the sense of a finite inventory of building blocks and a finite set of rules that can be used, once internalized, to generate an unlimited array of combinations.

Ironically, Patañjali does not claim that rituals should have grammars. On the contrary, his aim is to convince his readers that knowledge of a natural language also requires mastery of a grammar, revealing that he takes it for

⁴ The date is approximate. See Staal 1972:xxiv, who dates the *Mahābhāṣya* to ca. 150 BCE. In Indian tradition, the grammarian Patañjali came to be identified with the later author of the *yogasūtras*. See Puri 1957:iv.

⁵ *Mah.* 1.51; Joshi and Roodbergen 1986:74–5; Chatterji 1964:40–1. Note that even if “words” alone are implied, and not full “utterances” in the more inclusive sense, the use of compounds (*samāsa*) nonetheless makes the list of nouns alone infinite.

⁶ See, for example, Chomsky 1981a.

⁷ See *Mah.* 1.94; Joshi and Roodbergen 1986:136 and Chatterji 1964:78–9, where the *mahāsatras* are discussed in detail.

⁸ This probably includes, but apparently is not limited to, infinitely long utterances: *aprayukte dīrghasattravat yady apy aprayuktās tathāpy avasyaṃ dīrghasattraval lakṣaṇen-ānuvidheyāḥ* (*Mah.* 1.94; Joshi and Roodbergen 1986:136; Chatterji 1964:79: “in the case of unused [words], [it is] like long sacrifices. Though they are not used, they must necessarily be taught by the rules of the Śāstras like protracted sacrifices.”). It is important to note that these unuttered words are conceived of by Patañjali as grammatical, only not used in common speech. They are thus not equivalent (and in a sense opposed to) the *apaśābdas*, which are ungrammatical words mentioned earlier in the *Mah.* (1.46; Joshi and Roodbergen 1986:70; Chatterji 1964:35).

granted that rituals have such “grammars.” Thus, structure of sacrificial ritual appears to be the prototype for language—not, as some modern anthropologists would expect, the other way around.

It is perhaps not surprising that the analogy between linguistic and ritual “grammars” is found in India, and that in modern times this line of thought has been pursued primarily by Indologists. The interpretation of ritual along linguistic lines in Patañjali’s grammatical treatise is in accordance with the special status of grammar among the sciences in classical India, analogous to the status of mathematics in the West since at least the Renaissance.⁹

Moreover, there exists a particular affinity between grammatical and ritual literature in Sanskrit.¹⁰ This affinity is evident in an external similarity in form, inasmuch as the two corpora share several technical terms and concepts.¹¹ Thus, theoreticians in the grammatical and ritual schools, striving to formulate rules that would encompass the systems they were describing as economically as possible, resorted to similar methods of composition. The similarity between the ritual and grammatical manuals consisting of aphoristic rules (*sūtras*) is most striking in the use of meta-rules (*paribhāṣā*), rules about the application of rules.¹² These suggest a similarity not between the unconsciously internalized underlying grammars of language and ritual, but between the consciously formulated grammars (“grammar” in the sense of a textbook) of each.

Let us now turn to the Vedic passage that serves as the epigram of this chapter, and examine its treatment in the *Mahābhāṣya* (I.1.36):¹³

Four horns, three feet he has, two heads, seven hands he has. Bound in three ways the bull bellows loudly. A mighty god has entered mortals.

⁹ See Staal 1989:453.

¹⁰ See Renou 1942 and Cardona 1990.

¹¹ For example, composition in the form of *sūtra*; the use of *anuvṛtti* (the carrying over of preceding rules); and a metalinguistic usage of nominal declensions to imply logical statuses and relationships between components of the rules (see Renou 1942:445 and Hastings 2003, particularly 280); the use of *adhikāra* (“governing-rule,” influencing a number of succeeding rules), which was borrowed from ritual to grammar according to Renou 1942:445, and the use of *vā* (“or”) in a technical sense to indicate “optional” (Renou 1942:446; see also 452–5, 458).

¹² Renou 1942:444. Inspired by this similarity, in his proposed model of a grammar of ritual, Mishra (2010:95 n. 21) demonstrates the usefulness of Aṣṭādhyāyī 1.3.10, *yathāsaṃkhyam anudeśaḥ samānām*, for the grammar of ritual: if two lists have the same number of elements, then the elements of the following list correspond respectively to the elements of the previous list.

¹³ The Vedic text quoted in Patañjali’s work is indicated here in bold as follows: *catvāri śṛṅgā trāyo asya pādā / dvē śīrṣe sapṭā hāstāso asya // tridhā baddhō vṛṣabhō roravīti / mahō devō mārtyān ā viveśa*.

catvāri śṛṅgāni catvāri padajātāni nāmākhyātopasarganipātās ca / trayo asya pādās trayah kālā bhūtabhaviṣyadvartamānāḥ / dve śīrṣe dvau śabdātmanāu nityaḥ kāryās ca / sapṭa hāstāso asya sapṭa vibhaktayaḥ / tridhā baddhas triṣu sthāneṣu baddha urasi kaṇṭhe śīrasīti. See Joshi and Roodbergen 1986:11–12 (Sanskrit section), 52–3; see also Cardona 1990:12 and notes; in Chatterji 1964:18–19 (Sanskrit section) the penultimate line, *sapṭā hāstāso asya*—*sapṭa vibhaktayaḥ*, is missing.

Four horns—the four classes of words, noun, verb, *upasarga*, and particle

Three feet—the three divisions of time, past, future, present

Two heads—the two natures of words, “permanent” and “to be produced”

Seven hands—the seven case endings

Bound in three ways—formed in three places, the chest, the throat and the head.

The passage is structured as a commentary on a verse from the *R̥gveda* (4.58.3, represented above in bold), which describes a deity, perhaps Soma,¹⁴ in zoomorphic terms. Patañjali interprets these monstrous attributes allegorically, as referring to aspects of the Sanskrit language. The result is an awkward isomorphy between a bellowing, bound bull and the language to which Patañjali’s grammatical treatise is devoted: its four horns are the four parts of speech identified by traditional Sanskrit grammarians; its three feet are (roughly) the three tenses; its two heads are two types of denotation, or two distinct lexical corpora;¹⁵ its seven hands are the seven nominal declensions;¹⁶ and as spoken language is bound to the three physical organs of speech (chest, throat, and head), the bull is bound threefold.

Having created a correspondence between the parts of this bull and various aspects of the Sanskrit language, Patañjali proceeds to expound on the moral of his allegory. This moral, according to Patañjali, is itself allegorically embedded in the last part of the Vedic verse: “A mighty god has entered mortals.” The mighty god is identified with Speech/Sound (*śabda*),¹⁷ and the mortals who compose Patañjali’s audience are encouraged to study grammar, for, as Patañjali suggests, “we must study grammar in order to become like the mighty god.”¹⁸ How precisely the study of grammar is conducive to divinity is not explicit,¹⁹ but Bhartṛhari, a later grammarian referring to this same

¹⁴ As Geldner (1951:488) notes, this hymn is notably obscure, and there is some disagreement concerning the deity or deities referred to throughout the hymn. According to Joshi and Roodbergen, the hymn identifies the ghee (*ghṛta*) used in sacrifice with Soma, which is described as a bull; the sound of the soma trickling into a jar is taken as the bellowing of the bull. This is one example of the sacrificial connotations of the image of the bull. For other interpretations of this image, see Joshi and Roodbergen 1986:36, n. 163 and the bibliography cited there.

¹⁵ Concerning the distinction between *nitya* and *kārya*, see Cardona 1990:12, and 19 n. 51; and see Joshi and Roodbergen 1986:52 n. 165 and 53 n. 170; both list three different interpretations of this dichotomy offered by Bhartṛhari.

¹⁶ But see Cardona 1990:19 n. 52; Joshi and Roodbergen 1986:53–4 nn. 172, 173.

¹⁷ See Cardona 1990:18.

¹⁸ *mahān devaḥ śabdaḥ. martyā maraṇadharmāṇo manuṣyāḥ. tān āviveśa. mahatā devena naḥ sāmyaṃ yathā syād ity adhyeyaṃ vyākaraṇam.* See also 1.42, Joshi and Roodbergen 1986:64–5.

¹⁹ The idea is probably already embedded in Patañjali’s commentary on the word *roravīti* (“bellows”). Patañjali notes that this verb is equivalent to *śabdaṃ karoti* (“makes sound”). At first sight, this appears to be merely a literal lexical interpretation of the word *roravīti*. However, if considered as part of the allegory, this short comment may imply that the grammar-bull “makes” (*karoti*)—in the sense of “causes one to become” (as at RV 10.16.6)—the deity “Sound” (*śabda*).

allegory, explains, “Attainment of faultless speech is the attainment of Brahman. He who knows the secret of its functioning enjoys the immortal Brahman.” The study of grammar is, apparently, one way out of the lamentable cycle of births and rebirths.²⁰

Carrying Patañjali’s allegory to its natural conclusion, it is hoped that the present study, like the roaring beast and the grammatical allegory wherein it figures, will somehow be conducive, if not to immortality, at least to a better understanding of the labyrinths of the minds of the creators of sacrifice.

1.2 MAIMONIDES’ GENERALIZATIONS

One example may demonstrate the applicability of Patañjali’s insights to a corpus of texts that are geographically and linguistically distant from the Vedic sacrificial manuals. In the twelfth century, the Jewish scholar Moses Maimonides formulated several general rules about the sacrificial laws in biblical and rabbinic traditions. One cluster of these abstractions, consisting of Maimonides’ own generalizations as well as generalizations culled from earlier rabbinic literature (e.g. *b. Tem.* 14a), appears towards the end of his introduction to tractate *Zebahim*, in his Commentary on the Mishna:²¹

ואדא אסתקרית ג'מיע אלקרבנות אלתי תקדם ד'כרהא פאנת תג'ד אן ליס
פי ג'מיע קרבנות הצבור נקבה בוג'ה . . . וכד'לך תג'ד אן כל חטאת יחיד נקבה
. . . וכד'לך יבין אן ליס פי ג'מיע קרבנות הצבור חטאת מן נוע אלצ'אן ולא
עולה מן נוע אלמאעז . . .

And if you consider all of the abovementioned sacrifices, you will find that there is not a single female among all of the public offerings. . . Similarly you will find that every layperson’s purification offering is a female animal. . . Similarly it will become evident to you that there is not among all of the public offerings an ovine [i.e., sheep] purification offering, nor a caprine [i.e., goat] wholeburnt offering. . .

Note that many of Maimonides’ generalizations are found nowhere in the ancient sources he had at his disposal; they are Maimonides’ own abstractions, designed to accord with several examples of sacrifices within the biblical text (as interpreted by the early rabbinic authorities) and with a number of sacrificial combinations newly introduced in rabbinic traditions but not found in the biblical text. Yet of the many dozens of sacrificial combinations found in late Second Temple literature, including Qumranic

²⁰ Bhartṛhari, *VP*, 1.131–2. The translation is according to Pillai 1971:30. Bhartṛhari refers to this allegory in his commentary on Patañjali, the *Mahābhāṣyadīpikā*, 4.8.1 (Bronkhorst 1987:58). Concerning the soteriological aspect of the study of grammar, see Cardona 1990:19. See also Shulman 2005:376, who sees “nothing metaphorical” about the statement that “Grammar is meant to turn the grammatically informed speaker into God.”

²¹ Kafah 1963:19. See p. 199 nn. 2–3 for philological comments.